

“THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR”

All the Year Round

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THE YELLOW FLAG.

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER V. PARSON’S WORK.

MARTIN GURWOOD had a disturbed ride to Hendon. The difficulty of the task which he had undertaken to discharge seemed to increase as he progressed towards his destination, and he lay back in the cab buried in thought, revolving in his mind the best manner of breaking the fearful news of which he was the bearer, and wondering how it would be received. From time to time he raised himself to gaze at the prettiness of the scenery through which he was passing, to look at the wild, gorse-covered expanse of Hampstead Heath, and to refresh his eyes, wearied with the dull monotony of the London bricks and the glare of the London pavement, with that soft greenery which is so eminently characteristic of our northern suburbs; but the thought of the duty before him prevented his enjoying the sight as he otherwise would, and resuming his reverie, he remained absorbed until he roused himself at the entrance of Hendon village.

“There is the finger-post that Statham spoke of, and the little pond close by,” he said to himself. “It is no use taking the cab any further; I suppose I had better make the best of my way to Rose Cottage on foot.” So saying, he raised his stick, and, obedient to the signal, the cabman drew up at the side of the road. “You had better go and put up your horse at the inn,” said Martin to him; “it has been a long pull for him, poor animal, and I shall be some little time before I want to return.” The driver carefully inspected his fare.

He had come a long way, and was now setting down, not at any house, not at any lodge, but in an open country road. “Was it a case of—no!” The gravity of Martin Gurwood’s face, the length of his coat, the spotless stiffness of his white cravat, had their effect even on this ribald of the cab rank.

“You will come for me, sir, then, to the public when you want me?” he said, touching his hat with his forefinger, and drove away contented.

Then Martin Gurwood, following Statham’s directions, walked slowly up the little street, took the turning leading to the church, and looked out for Rose Cottage. There it was, standing some distance back from the road, with the ruddy glow of the Virginia creeper not yet wholly gone from it. Martin Gurwood stopped at the garden gate and looked at the little paradise, so trim and orderly, so neatly kept, so thoroughly comfortable, and yet so fully unpretentious, with the greatest admiration. Then he lifted the latch and walked towards the house.

The gate swung to behind him, and Alice, who was in her bedroom hearing little Bell her lessons, heard the clanging of the latch. She laid down the book, and stopping the child’s babbling by her uplifted finger, leant her head to listen.

“What is it, mamma?” asked little Bell, in wonderment.

“Hush, dear,” said Alice, “I heard the garden gate. No sound of wheels! Then he cannot have brought his luggage—still it must be John!” She rose from her seat and hurried down the stairs into the little hall. Just as she reached the half glass-door, and had her hand upon the lock, a man stepped into the portico, the figure was strange to her—it was not John.

She thought she would have fainted; her grasp on the door relaxed, and she staggered against the wall. Seeing her condition, the gentleman entered the hall, took her with a kind firm hold by the arm, and led her into the dining-room, the door of which stood open. She went passively, making no resistance, taking as it were no notice, but throwing herself into a chair, and staring blankly at him, stricken dumb with sickening apprehension.

"I am speaking to Mrs.—Mrs. Claxton?" he said, after a moment's pause, in a soft, kind voice.

He was a young man she began to notice, fair and good-looking, and dressed in clerical garb. That last fact had a peculiar significance for her. In the far north-east of England, on the sea-coast, where some of Alice's early days had been passed, it was the practice of the fishermen, when one of their number had been lost, to get the parson to go to the newly made widow and break the news to her. In a stormy season Alice had often seen the sable-garbed messenger proceeding on his doleful mission, and the remembrance of him and of the "parson's work," as it was called, when he was so engaged, rose vividly before her, and inspired her with sudden terror.

"You are a clergyman?" she said, looking hard at him.

"I am," he replied, still in the same soft tone. "My name is Gurwood—Martin Gurwood; and I have come here to—"

"You have come here to tell me something dreadful—I know it, I feel it—something dreadful about my husband!"

She pushed her hair back from off her face, and leaned forward on the table, looking at him, her eyes staring, her lips apart. Martin thought he had scarcely ever seen anything so beautiful.

"My visit to you certainly relates to Mr. Claxton," he began, and then he hesitated and looked down.

"Ah!" she cried, immediately noticing his confusion. "It is about John, then. There is something wrong, I know. Tell me all about it at once. I can bear it. I am strong—much stronger than I look. I entreat you not to keep me in suspense!"

"I am deeply grieved for you, madam," said Martin, "for you are right in anticipating that I bring bad news about Mr. Claxton. During his absence from home, he was attacked by a very sharp illness."

"He was ill when he left here," cried Alice. "I knew it, and Mr. Broadbent,

the doctor, knew it too, though I could not get him to say so. He ought not to have gone away. I ought not to have let him go. Now tell me, sir, pray; he has been very ill, you say; is he better?"

"I trust he is better," said Martin, solemnly.

Something in his tone struck Alice at once. "Ah," she cried, with a short sharp scream, "I know now—he is dead!" And covering her face with her hands, she sobbed violently.

Martin Gurwood sat by, gazing at her with tear-dimmed eyes. He was not a man given to the reading of character; he had not been in the room with this girl for more than five minutes, he had not exchanged ten sentences with her, and yet he was certain that Humphrey Statham was perfectly right in the estimate which he had formed of her, and that however cruelly she might have been treated, she herself was wholly innocent.

After some moments, Alice raised her head from out her hands. "I can listen to you now," she said, very quietly; "will you tell me all about it? I suppose it was the fact of my recognising you as a clergyman that gave me the intuitive knowledge that something dreadful had happened, and that you had come to tell me all. I am ready to hear it now!"

Martin Gurwood was horribly discomposed at this. He felt he could give her no information, for it would be impossible to tell her that the man whom she supposed to be her husband had died on the day that he left Hendon, as she would naturally inquire why the news of his death had so long been kept from her, and Martin owned to himself that he was not good at invention. He did not know what to say, and he therefore remained silent, his hand fluttering nervously round his mouth.

"My dear madam," commenced Martin, with much hesitation, "beyond the awful fact, there is indeed nothing to tell."

She looked disappointed for an instant; then striving to control the working of her lips, she said: "Did he ask for me? did he speak of me before—before—Ah, my darling John! My dear, good old John, kindest, best, and dearest. I cannot bear it; what shall I do!" She broke down utterly, and again buried her face, down which the tears were streaming, in her hands.

Knowing the impossibility of affording her any relief, Martin Gurwood sat helplessly by. He could only wait until the

outburst of grief should moderate ; he knew that it was of no use attempting to check it, so he waited.

Presently, she raised her head. "I thought I had more command over myself," she said. "I did not know I was so weak. But when there is any occasion for me to act, I shall be found strong enough. Tell me, sir, if you please—where is he? When will they bring him home?"

Martin Gurwood was not prepared for this question ; it was not one of those which he had talked over with Statham. Its being put so straightforward and direct, was a contingency which he never contemplated, and he knew not how to meet it.

"Where is he?" repeated Alice, observing his hesitation. "There is perhaps some difficulty about his being brought here."

"There—there is," said Martin Gurwood, catching at the chance.

"Then I will go to him ! I will be taken to him at once!"

"There will be some difficulty about that, my dear madam," said Martin. "I am afraid it cannot be managed so easily as you seem to anticipate."

"Difficulty ! Cannot be managed ! I do not understand what you mean, sir!"

"Why," said Martin, hesitating worse than ever, "you see that—in these matters—"

"In these matters who should be with them, who should be by them," cried Alice, "but their nearest and dearest ? Who shall tell me not to go to my husband ? Who shall gainsay my right to be by him at such a time ? He had no relatives ; he was mine—mine alone, and I was all the world to him ! Oh, my dear old John !" And again she burst into an agony of tears.

Martin Gurwood was almost at his wits' end. He foresaw that if the question were put to him again—as it would be put, he knew, so soon as her access of grief was over—if Alice again called upon him to take her to her husband, in default of any reasonable excuse he should probably be forced to confess the truth, and then he must be prepared to take the consequences, which he knew would be serious. This girl's utter prostration and humiliation, Mrs. Calverley's first outburst of rage, and subsequent malignant revenge, the shattering of the dead man's reputation, and the despicable slander and gossip which would ensue, Martin Gurwood thought of all these ; knew that their being called into

action was dependent on how to manage to get through the next few minutes. Why on earth had he undertaken this business ? Why had not Statham, whose experience in such matters ought to have forewarned him that such a point was likely to arise, why had he not instructed him how to deal with it ? From her point of view this poor girl was, no doubt, strictly right. She considered herself to be the dead man's widow (Martin had now not the smallest doubt on that point), and was therefore perfectly justified in demanding to be taken to him. Even if Martin Gurwood's conscience would have absolved him from telling a white lie on the occasion, his inventive powers were not of calibre sufficient to devise the necessary fiction ; he felt there was no chance for him but to tell Alice as little of the truth as would satisfy her, in as roundabout a manner as he could manage, and then to risk the result.

Just as he had arrived at this determination he raised his eyes, and saw a little child run past the window. A small, delicate-looking girl, with long fair hair streaming down her shoulders, prettily, even elegantly dressed, and laughing heartily as she pursued a large elastic ball which bounded before her. Martin saw her but for an instant, then she disappeared down the garden path.

But that momentary glimpse was sufficient to give Martin Gurwood an idea. And when Alice raised her tear-blurred face, now stern with the expression of a set and determined purpose, he was to a certain extent prepared for her.

"You must take me to my husband," she said, quietly. "I am grateful to you for coming here, Mr.—"

"Gurwood—my name is Martin Gurwood."

"I am grateful to you for coming here, Mr. Gurwood, and for the delicate manner in which you have performed your task. But now I wish to be taken to my husband. I have a right to make that claim, and I do so !"

"My dear madam," said Martin Gurwood, in the same quiet tone, but with much more firmness than he had hitherto exhibited, "I will not allow that you owe me the smallest obligation ; but if you did, the way in which you could best repay me would be by exciting yourself as little as possible. Under these most painful circumstances, you must not give way, Mrs. Claxton ; you must keep up as best you can, for the sake of his memory, for the

sake of the child which he has left behind him."

"Little Bell? the child who is playing in the garden, and who just now passed the window?"

"Yes, a fragile, fair, bright-looking mite."

"Little Bell! She is not Mr. Claxton's child, sir, nor mine, but she is another living proof of John's goodness, and thoughtfulness, and care for others." She rose from her seat as she spoke, and wandered in a purposeless manner to the window. "So thoughtful, so unselfish, so generous," she murmured. "It is three years ago since little Bell first came here."

"Indeed," said Martin, delighted at the unexpected reprieve, and anxious to divert her thoughts as long as possible from the one dread subject. "Indeed. And where did she come from?"

"From the workhouse," said Alice, not looking at him, but gazing straight before her through the window, against which her forehead was pressed; "from the workhouse. It was John's doing that we brought her here—all John's doing. It was from Mr. Tomlinson, the clergyman," she continued, in a low tone, and with a certain abrupt incoherence of manner, "that we heard about it—such cold weather, with the snow lying deep in the fields. Mr. Tomlinson told us that they had found her lying against a haystack in one of Farmer Mullins's fields, half frozen, and with a baby at her breast. So thin and pale and delicate she looked when we went down to see her lying in the workhouse bed. She had been starved as well as frozen, Mr. Broadbent said, and her cheeks were hollow, and there were great dark circles round her eyes. But she must have been pretty, oh, so pretty. Her chestnut hair was soft and delicate, and her poor thin hands, almost transparent, were white and well-shaped."

In his first relief from the repetition of her demand which he expected Alice would make, Martin Gurwood did not pay much attention to the commencement of her little story, but as it progressed his interest became excited, and at this point he left his chair and stood by her at the window.

"Who was she?" he asked. "Where did she come from?"

"We never knew," said Alice, shaking her head. "She never spoke from the time they found her until her death, two days after; but she had never been married; there was no wedding-ring on her finger,

and when they told me that, I turned to John and spoke to him."

"Do you recollect what you said?" asked Martin, half with a desire to satisfy his own curiosity, half wishing to lead her on."

"Recollect?" said Alice. "I remember the very words. 'Oh John,' I said, 'my dear old John, isn't it an awful thing to think how this poor creature has been deceived; you may depend upon it, John,' I said, 'that the man who has brought her to this shame made her a promise of marriage, or deceived her in some cruel and heartless manner.'"

"Did you say that?" asked Martin, in a low voice.

"I did, and more. 'Her death will lie at his door, John,' I said, 'as surely as if he had killed her with his hand. He did kill her, first her soul and then her body, and he will be held responsible for the murder of each!' I recollect then that John threw his arms around me, and implored me to stop. His face was quite white, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks, for he had the tenderest heart. And then when the poor girl died, he proposed that we should take the baby and adopt it for our own, and we did so. Strange it was, I recollect, that for weeks after that, whenever John was at home, and in one of his silent moods, which came upon him first about that time, I would see him of an evening, when he thought I was not looking at him, with his eyes fixed upon me, and with the tears stealing down his cheeks."

Was it strange, knowing what he did? Martin thought not, but he did not speak.

"He was thinking of that poor girl, I suppose," murmured Alice, half to herself; "thinking of all the troubles and sufferings she had gone through; thinking, I shouldn't wonder, that they might have been mine, if I had not been mercifully placed in a different position, and out of the reach of temptation, for he had the tenderest heart, and he loved me so dearly—oh, so dearly, that the mere thought of anything happening to me to cause me pain or suffering, was enough to make him utterly wretched." Then the sense of her situation dawning again upon her, she cried out: "And now he is lost to me for ever! There is no one now to think of or take care of me! We were all in all to each other, and now I am left alone in the world; what shall I do, oh, what shall I do!"

It had been Martin Gurwood's lot, in the

discharge of his clerical duties, to listen a hundred times in his life to this despairing wail from women just robbed of their husbands by death: a hundred times had he cheered the darkened and dispirited soul with recapitulations of the Almighty goodness, with the hope that the parting from the loved and lost one was but temporary, and not of long duration, and that in the future the two reunited might enjoy an eternity of bliss such as they had never known here. What could he say to the woman now grovelling before him in her misery and despair? What word of encouragement, what scrap of hope could he whisper into her dulled ear? How could he, with the fearful knowledge which he had acquired, speak to her of the future of this man, whose memory she so blindly worshipped, ignorant of the manner in which he had basely betrayed her? How could he even speak kindly of the dead man's past, and echo the terms of affection in which she mentioned him, knowing, as he did, the full measure of the deceit and iniquity practised upon her by the man whom she imagined to have been her husband?

No! In all Martin Gurwood's clerical career (and the experiences of a zealous and earnest clergyman in an agricultural district are fraught with far more horrors, and tend to a far lower appreciation of the human race than the uninitiated can imagine), he had never had to deal with such a case as this. In his reproof he could temper justice with mercy, in his consolation he could bid "despair and anguish flee the struggling soul," but to attempt now to cast down the idol from its pedestal, to attempt to show to the heart-broken woman, whose sobs were resounding through the room, that the man whose loss she was deplored had been her worst and bitterest enemy, to point out that the emotion which he had exhibited at the story of the outcast woman and her baby, was merely caused by "the conscience prick and the memory smart," proving to him the similarity of his own crime with that of the man on whom he was invited to sit in judgment—to do all or any of this was beyond Martin Gurwood's power; he ought to have done it, he knew, but he was only human after all, and he decided to leave it alone.

The story of the frozen woman with the baby in her arms—his thoughts had wandered away to that—slight and delicate was she, and with long chestnut hair—what

a strange coincidence! That this man, who had himself deceived a young and trusting woman, should by his unsuspecting victim be called upon to exercise his charity towards another victim, should be expected to denounce the crime of which he had himself been guilty! How strange to think that—Martin was interrupted in his reverie by a movement on Alice's part. She had risen to her feet, twisted her dishevelled hair into a knot behind her head, and stood pale and statuesque before him.

"I shall be ready in five minutes," she said, "and I shall then expect you to take me straight to where my husband's body is lying. If you refuse to do so, I shall call upon you to tell me where it is—to give me the address. I have a right as his wife—oh, my God!" she moaned—"as his widow! to demand that, and I shall do so."

The critical time had arrived! Martin knew that, and felt stronger and more self-reliant than he had anticipated. The fact was, that he thought he saw a way of tiding the matter over until he could communicate with Humphrey Statham, and possibly get his friend to take the burden of the disclosure upon himself.

"My dear madam," he said, "I can quite appreciate your anxiety, which is perfectly natural under the circumstances, and which I shall be most anxious to alleviate, but I must ask you to have a little patience. This evening—should you still wish it—you shall be taken to the place where Mr. Claxton's body was conveyed."

"Where is that place, Mr. Gurwood?" cried Alice. "There is some mystery about this which I do not understand; I insist upon knowing where this place is!"

"You shall know," said Martin, quietly. "The place to which the body was conveyed, was Mr. Calverley's house in Great Walpole-street."

"Mr. Calverley's! What, John's partner?"

"Mr. Calverley, of Mincing-lane. You have heard of him?"

"Oh, a thousand times. Mr. Claxton was a sleeping partner in the house of Calverley and Company, you know. Oh, of course it was quite natural that my poor darling should be carried there! I am so relieved, Mr. Gurwood. I was afraid that poor John had been taken to some horrid place, and thought that was the reason why you objected to my going there; but as he is at Mr. Calverley's house—"

"For that reason you must defer going there until the evening," said Martin Gur-

wood, with more firmness than he had hitherto shown. "This sad event has thrown the house into great confusion, and it will be necessary that I should go back and apprise Mrs. Calverley, whom you do not know, I think, of your intention of coming there to-night."

"I suppose you are right," said Alice, in a disappointed tone. "I suppose, even at such a dreadful time as this, there are regulations and observances which must be respected. Will you promise me that you will come to me this evening?"

"Either I myself or some friend whom I can trust," said Martin. "And now I must leave you, for the time is short, and I have a great deal to do in it."

He took one glance at her pale, tearful face, with even more than interest, and withdrew.

He was thinking to himself how very beautiful she was, when his reflections were checked by his catching sight of a female figure, in a black cloak, in the path before him.

On his near approach the lady raised her veil, and to his astonished eyes revealed the features of Madame Du Tertre.

STONEHENGE; WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT.

THE usual autumn manoeuvres will this year be held on the broad expanse of Salisbury Plain. A nobler arena could not be selected for the purpose. But it is not to discuss the military question, or anything connected with it, that I take up the pen; but to direct in advance the attention of the thousands of spectators who will be attracted to the spot to one of the most venerable monuments of antiquity that remain on the globe—the ruins of Stonehenge. Ruins, alas! they are, but precious relics of a pre-historic age, of which we know but little, though we may guess a great deal. There are many monuments of antiquity still remaining in England that, if destroyed, could be restored—as York Minster was, and as Warwick Castle will be—but there are other and still more interesting memorials of the past, which, if destroyed, could never be restored, and which, running no risk from fire, are nevertheless exposed to a greater danger than that arising from any anger of the elements short of an earthquake—the danger of piecemeal removal at the hands of the owners of the ground on which

they stand, or the ruthless utilitarianism of people who would not scruple to pave a road, or build a barn or a wall with the precious relics of antiquity. Need it be said that the monuments referred to are the Druidical stones still left standing in mysterious antiquity at Avebury, in Wiltshire, and those equally mysterious, but grander and more sublime, in the centre of Salisbury Plain, and known to the whole civilised world under the comparatively modern name of Stonehenge?

Had our ancestors been as wise and provident as they might have been, even so late as three centuries ago, these singular remnants of a dead religion and a worn-out civilisation might have been made national property, and preserved at the national expense from the hands of the spoiler. But this unfortunately was not done; and of the great temples of Avebury and Stonehenge, but little now remains to testify to the Titanic architecture of the people who inhabited the British Isles a thousand years before the invading hosts of Julius Caesar set foot upon the shore. The Avebury stones have suffered greatly from the depredations of the Wiltshire farmers and proprietors. In the year 1648, when John Aubrey, the antiquary, visited the place, he counted sixty-three of the pillars still standing within the circular trench. In 1720, Doctor Stukeley found only twenty-three remaining; and in 1812, Sir Richard Hoare found but seventeen. At present only two monoliths of the great western avenue are standing. The rest have been broken into pieces, and removed—possibly to build pigstyes, possibly to build barns or out-houses for the greedy or unthinking depredators, who never heard of the difference between a Druidical high-priest, who lived three thousand years ago, and a clodhopper who perpetrated these acts of Vandalism the day before yesterday. For some time past the antiquaries and scholars of Wiltshire and elsewhere have been up in arms to prevent these encroachments—but "may not a man do what he will with his own?" And as the scholars and antiquaries were either unable or unwilling to purchase the land and its precious relics from the legal owners, these latter did as seemed best in their own eyes, and left scholarship and antiquarianism to show their teeth in the approved British fashion—without biting. Fortunately, one gentleman with the means, the knowledge, and the public spirit, was found to do what ought long ago to have been done by the

State. Sir John Lubbock stepped forth to the rescue of Avebury, and by his liberality its monuments will be preserved as they stand—safe from all further danger. But ought such priceless relics of the early British people—as old as, or it may be older than, the Pyramids—be exposed to such forlorn hopes as this? And ought not the British nation, though late in the work (but not too late), determine once for all that a greater than Avebury, the grand, the weird, the mysterious, the awful Stonehenge, shall no longer be at the mercy of the owners of Salisbury Plain, and all that stands thereon, but be preserved for ever as the property of the British nation? It would not cost much, and if the cost were a hundred times greater than it is possible to be, it would not be too great to pay for the preservation of so mighty a monument of our earliest ancestors.

Though everybody in these days of reading is supposed to know all about everything (especially if they are candidates for employment under the government, and are to undergo the crucial torture of a competitive examination), nobody knows much about Stonehenge, except that it stands upon Salisbury Plain, and is the imperfect and comparatively small remnant of a much larger edifice; that it consists of two circles—an inner and an outer—the outer composed of a number of huge monoliths, and connected at the top by architraves of similar monoliths, many of which have fallen from their places by the action of time, or the more ruthless agency of man; and that in all probability the edifice was a temple or place of worship, erected by the earliest inhabitants of Great Britain, perhaps two thousand years before the Christian era. Indeed, some writers, so great is their reverence for these remains, and so decided their opinion of their vast antiquity, have not hesitated to express their belief that they were erected before the days of Noah, and are the only architectural remains of the "World before the Flood."

In matters relating to pre-historic times, names have the value of things, and throw light upon much which might, without their assistance, be hopelessly dark. The British name of this temple, as enshrined in the pages of early writers who knew nothing whatever of the language of the early Britons and Celts, was described as *Choir-Gaur*, or *Choir Vaure*; and the Saxon name given to it in the comparatively recent times of the conquest of the aboriginal Britons

by that Germanic people, is *Stone Henge*. A few remarks on the meaning of both of these names will help to clear up some doubtful points that have never yet been explained by any writer on the subject.

Firstly, as regards *Choir-Gaur*, or *Choir Vaure*. The Saxon and Norman monks, and the other early writers who first mention Stonehenge, were utterly ignorant of the language of the Celtic people, though that language was then, and still continues to be, spoken in the British Isles in its two great varieties of Cymric or Welsh, and Gaelic or Erse, the former confined to Wales, and the latter to the Highlands of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man. Looking to Greek and Latin for the etymology instead of to the Celtic, they discovered that *Choir-Gaur*, or *Choir Vaure*, meant *Chorea gigantum*, or the "Dance of Giants." Another set of etymologists, not satisfied with this derivation (the chief of whom was one Doctor Smith, who wrote in 1771), maintained that "choir" was the same as the English "choir" of a church, "the true sense of the word being lost in all the Celtic languages," and that *gaur* in the Irish, *gauvr* in the Armorican, spoken in Brittany, and *gafr* in Welsh, all signify a he-goat, the sign of the zodiac known as Capricorn. From this Doctor Smith inferred that his readers "would be convinced that Stonehenge was an astronomical temple erected by the Ancient Druids for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies."

In support of the first derivation many supposed ancient legends and traditions were cited; one to the effect that the enormous monoliths of which the temple was composed were brought by giants from Africa, as was set forth by Nennius in the ninth, and Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth century, and repeated by Giraldus Cambrensis, and many subsequent writers. It was further stated that these giants first conveyed the stones from Africa to Kildare, in Ireland, and that the great British magician, Merlin, transported them by demoniacal agency from Kildare to Salisbury Plain. The stones were believed to possess a mysterious and medicinal virtue, and it was supposed that the object of the giants in bringing them from Africa, and of Merlin in bringing them into England, was to make baths of them, that the stones might impart their healing virtue to the water. Most of these legends and fancies were evidently due to a false etymology and a mistranslation. The meaning of the

British word coir, or choir, as may be seen in any Erse or Gaelic dictionary, is "right" or "justice," suggestive of the idea that the edifice was a court of justice or religion (the English court and the French court are derived from this root). The word gaur is a corruption or misapprehension of the sound of the adjective vaure, more properly mhor, pronounced "vor," great. Thus, coire vaure or "coir mhor" would signify in this ancient language, by far the most ancient now spoken in Europe, the great hall, court, circle, or Temple of Justice and Right.

The word Stone Henge, or Hanging Stones, is derived from those stones, placed by nature during some great convulsion, or by the art of man, at such an angle or inclination upon the top of another, that they will rock with a slight propulsion without being overthrown. On this point the learned Jacob Bryant, in his Analysis of "Ancient Mythology," throws a flood of light. "It was usual," he says, "among the ancient Egyptians, to place, with much labour, one vast stone upon another for a religious memorial. The stones thus placed they sometimes poised so equably that they were affected with the least external force; nay, a breath of wind would sometimes make them vibrate. . . . I question whether there be in the world a monument which is much prior to the celebrated Stonehenge. There is reason to think that it was erected by a foreign colony, one of the first which came into this island. There is extant at this day (the close of the eighteenth century) one of those rocking stones of which I have been speaking. The ancient Egyptians distinguished stones erected with a religious view by the name of amber, by which was signified anything solar and divine. The Grecians called them *Petræ Ambrosiæ*, and there are representations of such upon coins. Horapollo speaks of a sacred book in Egypt styled *Ambres*, which was so called from its sanctity, being a medicinal book of *Hermes*, and intrusted solely to the care of the sacred scribes. Stonehenge is composed of these amber stones; hence the next town (Amesbury) is denominated *Ambresbury*—not from a Roman *Ambrosius*, for no such person existed, but from the *Ambrosia* *Petræ*, in whose vicinity it stands. Some of them, as I have taken notice, were rocking-stones, and there was a wonderful monument of this sort near *Penzance*, in *Cornwall*, though I believe it is now in a great mea-

sure ruined. It still retains the name of *Main Amber*, by which is signified the sacred stones."

The name Stonehenge is the Saxon translation of the Celtic *Crom-lech*, hanging, inclined, or crooked stones, of which so many exist not only in the British Isles, but in every part of Europe. By the time that the Celtic or Gaelic had ceased to be the dominant language in the south of England, and had been to a large extent superseded by that of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, another meaning was found for the words Stone Henge, and they were interpreted to signify the stones of *Hengist*, who, along with *Horsa*, was supposed to have commanded one of the invading hordes of Germans who established themselves in the east and south of England. It is doubtful, however, whether such persons as *Hengist* and *Horsa* ever existed, for *Hengist* is but the German *Hengst*, a horse, and *Horsa* a mare—figures that were emblazoned on the flags of the invaders. *Nennius* is the first who has recorded this tradition, and has been duly followed by *Geoffrey of Monmouth*. He says: "Stonehenge was a monument erected in the reign of *Aurelius Ambrosius*" (an imaginary king) "by *Ambrosius Merlin*" (the famous wizard), "to perpetuate the treachery of *Hengist*, the Saxon general, who, having desired a friendly meeting with *Vortigern*, at the monastery of *Ambresbury*, assassinated him, with four hundred and sixty of his barons and consuls, after which the bodies of the slaughtered Britons were interred at a burying-place near the monastery where they had received their deaths; and *Aurelius Ambrosius*, going to see the sepulchre soon after he had mounted the British throne, not only shed tears at the sight of it, but resolved to perpetuate the memory of that piece of ground, which was honoured with the bodies of so many noble patriots that died for their country, with some noble monument." This, then, according to the early historians, was the first idea of Stonehenge, communicated by the monarch to the prophet *Merlin*, who brought the stones from *Kildare* by magic art and the aid of the devil. This second myth hangs upon the misunderstood word *Hengst*, as the first did upon the mis-translated word *choir*, and both are equally illusory, more especially the Saxon legend which would make Stonehenge an erection of no greater antiquity than the middle of the fifth century. That the temples of *Avebury* and Stonehenge existed at the time

of the Roman invasion, though not mentioned by Julius Caesar or the Roman historians, is clear from the fact that the Roman way from Bath, the city of the *Aqua Calide*, or warm waters, to London, reached Silbury Hill in a straight line at Avebury, and then turned abruptly south to avoid these memorable remains. This fact alone would be sufficient to disprove the Saxon origin of Stonehenge, as also the equally absurd supposition of Inigo Jones, who was requested by King James the First to write an essay on this mysterious subject. Inigo Jones, who does not appear to have visited the place, was of opinion that Stonehenge was a temple of the Romans of the Tuscan order, dedicated to the worship of Coelus.

The questions always asked with regard to Stonehenge, or the Coir-mhor, are: Whence came the mighty monoliths to Salisbury Plain? For what purpose were they erected on end, in the form of an inner and an outer circle, and long avenues of approach? And who and what were the people, and at what age of the world did they flourish who erected these and similar monuments in other parts of Europe?

With regard to the first question, it is impossible to believe that in the very early age to which the building must be referred—when the largest ships were but small boats in comparison with ours—that such ponderous monoliths, so difficult to handle, could have been conveyed into England by sea. Either England, at that remote epoch, must have been a portion of the European continent, or, being an island as now, the stones must have been found in the vicinity of the place where they stand, or transported from some other part of England at no great distance. Going back to geological epochs, long before the earth was first fitted for the habitation of man, one of two agencies must have been at work to account for the enormous masses of stone, standing in plains, remote from mountains in every part of Europe and of the world. These are, first, volcanic action projecting them violently from the bowels of the earth, and hurling them to great distances; and, second, glacial action, by which these rocks were wafted on the moving sea or current of ice from the North Pole southwards, until they were deposited on the soil in warmer latitudes. It is far more probable that the huge monoliths of Salisbury Plain were found there by the ancient Celtic people, than that they

were transported by mechanical agencies from any considerable distance. And this suggests an answer to the second question. Bringing with them their own religion, their own civilisation, their own rites and customs, these monoliths would appeal strongly to the imagination and feeling of the immigrants, and remind them of the similar monoliths and gigantic rock-carving of the religion and the civilisation which they had left behind. The tradition that the stones came from Africa suggests the Egyptian home of the Druidical religion which these earliest colonists introduced into the then sparsely inhabited, or perhaps wholly uninhabited isles of Britain. The Egyptians, living in a flat country, and skilled in the raising of great monoliths, were partial to their use, not only in the construction of their religious temples, but as conspicuous monuments in a flat country. Cleopatra's Needle, now lying in the sands of Egypt, is one instance, and the beautiful obelisk of Luxor, standing on the Place de la Concorde in Paris, and brought from Egypt, and erected by the government of King Louis Philippe, is another example of the great part played by monoliths in the art and civilisation of the East. The Sphynx is another monolith of world-wide fame. Jacob Bryant suggests that the Pyramids themselves are each formed of a single rock, roughly hewn into the form in which we now see it, and made even on the surface by artificial masonry fitted into the inequalities of the original mass. Whether or not Great Britain was colonised by Egyptians or Phenicians, or by some other Asiatic race, it is impossible to affirm or deny with certainty, though, on the evidence of language, we are compelled to believe that they were an Eastern people, and that Druidism, their form of religion, was Eastern also. Bel, or Baal, "the living God," was worshipped by the Irish and Scottish Celts and Druids long after the Christian era, and that the same god, under the same name, was worshipped by the contemporaries of Moses, we know from the books of the Old Testament. The Beal fire, or Bel-tein, formerly lighted on all the hill-tops, from Cornwall to Cape Wrath, is still spoken of in Scotland, and renowned in Scottish legendary poetry. Little is known as to the Druids and their worship, their rites or their observances. The first writer who mentions them in Britain is Julius Caesar, who, coming as a military conqueror, is not likely to have known

very much about them, or to have been initiated very deeply, if at all, into their mysteries. He records that Britain was the great school of the European Druids, and that their chief seat was in the Isle of Mona, or Anglesea. The people of Gaul and Germany, who wished to complete their education in Druidical learning, resorted to Mona for the purpose. The Druids formed a distinct caste, being the theologians, the philosophers, the poets, the musicians, and the scientific men of the nation. They performed all the public sacrifices and rites of religion, distributed rewards and punishments, and performed all the functions of justice. They had the power to excommunicate offenders and unbelievers, and deny civil and religious privileges and rights to all who dared to oppose their decrees. They taught that there was one supreme and only God, the creator and upholder of the universe. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and its transmigration through various bodies to all eternity. They studied the motions of the heavenly bodies, and were both astronomers and astrologists. Yet, although this much is learned from Cæsar, and corroborated by other authorities, not only their doctrine, but their name, remains more or less of a mystery. The Greeks, not knowing the venerable Asiatic language which the Druids brought into Europe along with them, misinterpreted and misunderstood their words, and fell into an error, which has pervaded all literature and history to this day, as to the true meaning of Druid. The word is supposed to be derived from *drus*, the Greek for an oak-tree, and it is alleged that they worshipped their god, or gods, in oaken groves, and were therefore called *Druides*. There is no proof that the Druids worshipped under oaks, or any other trees, except in circumstances where they could not construct a stone temple on a plain, or where was the necessity for such magnificent edifices and central temples as they erected in Avebury and Stonehenge in England, and Carnac in Brittany? There is, moreover, no reason why a religion and a language so much more ancient than the language and religion of Greece, should have borrowed a title from a more modern tongue. In the ancient Celtic and the modern Gaelic, which are fundamentally the same, an oak is called *darag*, a word which has but two letters in common with, and but very slight resemblance to the Greek *drus*. In Celtic the word *druid* means to enclose, to shut, to surround; *druideadh* means the act of

enclosing, encircling, or surrounding; and *druidh* means a philosopher, a magician, a wizard, a high priest. These derivations would seem to show that a Druid was a priest of the inner circle, or holy of holies, and one who had been duly initiated into all the mysteries of the shrine, or sanctuary, into which the profane vulgar were not permitted to penetrate.

Another curious point with reference to the Druids is, that they were sometimes called in Greece by the name of *Saronides*, from *Saron*, who, says Mr. Bryant, "was undoubtedly an ancient god in Greece. Diana, the sister of Apollo, was named *Saronia*." Mr. Bryant, ignorant, as he confesses himself, of the Eastern languages, as well as of the Celtic, defines *Sar-on* as meaning the Lord of Light. The same people that gave the name of *Coir-mhor* to Stonehenge, possess in their language the two syllables which the Greeks borrowed from an Eastern source, namely, *Sar*, meaning a lord, a prince, or a hero, and *An*, or *On*, a planet. Thus *Saron*, in Celtic, would mean the Lord of the Planet, or the Sun, or the Lord of Life and Light, the same as Apollo, a fact that would help to prove, what is already known, that the Druids were sun-worshippers.

All the religions of the ancient world, with the sole exception of the Hebrew, were astronomical, and either taught the worship of the sun, as the visible representation of the one supreme God, or included in their worship the whole of the heavenly bodies, as manifestations of His power and glory. The priests of India, Egypt, and Phenicia were all astronomers, as were those, though perhaps to a smaller extent, of Greece and Rome. Their chief temples always served an astronomical as well as a religious purpose. It has recently been established that the Pyramids were astronomical edifices, formed for the verification of the motions of the heavenly bodies. It is suspected, with good reason, that Stonehenge partook of this character, so essential to the objects of Druidism. "Stonehenge," says Mr. Wansey, writing in 1796, "stands in the best situation possible for observing the heavenly bodies, as there is an horizon nearly three miles distant on all sides. But till we know the methods by which the ancient Druids calculated eclipses long before they happened, so as to have made their astronomical observations with so much accuracy as Cæsar mentions, we cannot explain the theoretical uses of Stonehenge."

A letter, dated the 22nd of June, 1872, signed W. Beck, and published in the Times three days afterwards, corroborates, in a striking manner, the tradition that Stonehenge was originally intended for astronomical, and consequently for devotional purposes. "It is no slight inducement," says the writer, "that will take a person into so exposed a situation as Salisbury Plain at the chilling hour of three o'clock in the morning; but, unless bad weather prevails, a group of visitors, more or less numerous, is sure to assemble at that hour of dawn on every 21st of June, there to watch for the rising sun. As the hour approaches they gather to the circles of Stonehenge, from the centre of which, looking north-east, a block of stone, set at some distance from the ruin, is so seen as that its top coincides with the line of the horizon, and, if no mist or cloud prevent, the sun as it rises on this, the morning of the longest day in the year, will be seen coming up exactly over the centre of the stone, known, from this circumstance, as the "Pointer." Our group of watchers yesterday morning numbered some thirty-five, assembled chiefly from the neighbouring towns—four of them, however, from London, who had walked from Salisbury through the night, for the chance of seeing this interesting proof of the solar arrangement of the circles of Stonehenge. As one who has now on several occasions been present, and seen the sun thus come up over the Pointer, and strike its first rays through the central entrance to the so-called altar stone of the ruin, I commend this obvious proof of solar worship in its constructors to those recent theorists who see in Stonehenge only a memorial of a battle or a victory. Let a visitor, also, on any day at noon look to this Pointer, and see if the huge stone be not set at such a particular inclination as to be like the gnomon of a sun-dial."

Stonehenge, its age, its origin, its whole purposes and intentions are, and probably ever will be, mysterious, unfathomable, and only partially provable. All the greater is the reason that a monument so remarkable, and undoubtedly one of the most ancient of the works of man now existing on the face of the globe, should be taken at once and for ever under the national protection. It has suffered much from the rude hands of the spoiler. It is more than time that such spoliation in the future should be prevented by all the powers which the nation, as custodian of so priceless a me-

morial of antiquity is alone able to employ. Almost any other of our national monuments, if destroyed, could be replaced. This alone, if lost—and it only can be lost by wilful destruction—would be a calamity, in every respect irreparable. There may not be another Sir John Lubbock to step in to the rescue, and if there be, it should not be left to chance, and a single person, to do that which the State should consider it both its pride and its duty to undertake.

AT THY GRAVE.

WAVES the soft grass at my feet ;
Dost thou feel me near thee, sweet ?
Though the earth upon thy face,
Holds thee close from my embrace,
Yet my spirit thine can reach,
Needs betwixt us twain no speech,
For the same soul lives in each.

NOW I meet no tender eyes
Seeking mine, in soft surmise
At some broken utterance faint,
Smile quick brightening, sigh half spent.
Yet in some sweet hours gone by,
No responding eye to eye
Needed we, forsympathy.

LOVE, I seem to see thee stand
Silent in a shadowy land ;
With a look upon thy face
As if even in that dim place
Distant voices smote thine ears,
Memories of vanished years,
Or faint echoes of these tears.

YET, I would not have it thus.
Then would be most piteous
Our divided lives, if thou
An imperfect bliss shouldst know.
Sweet my suffering, if to thee
Death has brought the faculty
Of entire felicity.

RATHER would I weep in vain,
That thou canst not share my pain,
Deem that Lethean waters roll
Softly o'er thy separate soul,
Know that a divided bliss
Makes thee careless of my kiss,
Than that thou shouldst feel distress.

HUSH ! I hear a low sweet sound
As of music stealing round.
Forms thy hand the thrilling chords
Into more than spoken words ?
Ah ! 'tis but the gathering breeze
Whispering to the budding trees,
Or the song of early bees.

LOVE, where art thou ? Canst thou not
Hear me, or is all forgot ?
Seest thou not these burning tears ?
Can my words not reach thine ears ?
Or betwixt my soul and thine
Has some mystery divine
Sealed a separating line ?

IS it thus then after death,
Old things none remembereth ?
Is the spirit henceforth clear
Of the life it gathered here ?
Will our noblest longings seem
Like some dim-remembered dream
In the after-world's full beam ?

Hark ! the rainy wind blows loud,
Scuds above the hurrying cloud ;
Hushed is all the song of bees ;
Angry murmurs of the trees
Herald tempests. Silent yet
Sleepest thou—nor tear, nor fret
Troubles thee. Can I forget ?

MAD DOGS.

THE French equivalent of "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him," is, "Quand on veut tuer son chien, on dit qu'il est enragé;" "When you want to kill your dog, you have only to say that he is mad." France has a right to her version of the proverb, because, whatever may be the reason, canine madness is much more common in that country than it is in the United Kingdom, to a degree quite unaccounted for by its more southern latitude, or any other obvious cause. The number of deaths there from that frightful malady is annually so great as to startle strangers who for the first time become cognisant of the fact.

Nor is the unequal prevalence of hydrophobia confined alone to European countries. Mr. Darwin found the same irregularity occurring in South America. In one valley in Northern Chile, an order had recently been issued that all stray dogs should be killed, and he saw many lying dead on the road. A great number had lately gone mad; several men had been bitten, and had died in consequence. On previous occasions hydrophobia had prevailed in this valley. It is remarkable thus to find so strange and dreadful a disease, appearing time after time in the same isolated spot. It has been remarked that certain villages in England are in like manner much more subject to this visitation than others.

We may even ask how hydrophobia got to South America. Doctor Unanue states that it was first known there in 1803; it broke out in Central America, and slowly travelled southwards. This statement is confirmed by the fact of Azara and Ulloa having never heard of it in their time. It reached Arequipa in 1807; and it is said that some men there, who had not been bitten, were affected by eating a bullock which had died of hydrophobia. After 1808, a long interval ensued without any cases. On inquiry, Mr. Darwin did not hear of hydrophobia in Van Diemen's Land, or in Australia; and Burchell says that during the five years he was at the Cape of Good Hope, he never heard of an instance of it.

Webster asserts that at the Azores hydrophobia has never occurred; and the same assertion has been made with respect to Mauritius and St. Helena. Would it be possible to stamp it out, once for all, in the British Isles ?

Canine madness, that hopeless malady which is communicable to other animals and to the human race, is commonly spoken of as "hydrophobia." As no known remedy exists, it is important to be able to recognise its symptoms, in order to be upon our guard and take every possible preventive measure.

Hydrophobia simply means the dread of water, which is one of the symptoms of canine madness; but the same symptom also occurs in other diseases distinct from it. The horror of water almost (not absolutely) always accompanies canine madness, but it is also met with, in greater or less intensity, in several nervous diseases. It may be brought on by strong mental emotion of various kinds. A schoolmaster, after a violent fit of anger, died in fifteen hours, with decided symptoms of hydrophobia. Fright will have the same effect. A man bitten by a dog which he believed to be mad, had fearful attacks of hydrophobia, which ceased several months afterwards, on his learning that the dog remained in perfect health. A girl who witnessed a sudden broil, in which the disputants fought with swords, was so terror-stricken that she was seized with hydrophobia, and died. A woman whose companions had abandoned her alone in the fields all night, was greatly terrified thereby; next day, she refused every sort of liquid, and shortly died.

It is therefore not surprising that an aversion to water should have been occasionally induced by the bite of men and animals that were not mad. Malpighi records the case of his mother, who became hydrophobic after having been bitten by her daughter in an epileptic fit. Cases are not rare in which, when one person has bitten another, the bitten person has been attacked by, and sometimes died of apparent canine madness. The most singular instance is that of a young man, twenty-nine years of age, who bit his own finger in a violent fit of rage, and became so hydrophobic in four-and-twenty hours, that at the very name of water he fell into strong convulsions. The above facts (which might be considerably multiplied) are very important to reassure timid persons that a passing repugnance

for liquids does not necessarily imply the existence of true, hopeless, canine madness. It is curable, and has often yielded not only to judicious medical treatment, but to mere moral remedies.

It is high time, however, to demolish the prevalent belief that if a dog eats and drinks there is nothing the matter with him. He may eat and drink, and yet be, all the while, a great deal madder than the maddest March hare. It is equally incorrect to suppose that madness in dogs manifests itself by fits of rage and attempts to bite. This error is all the more dangerous, because it induces us to accept, without mistrust, caresses from an animal whose bite may prove ultimately mortal. An ailing dog, although sulky in his behaviour to indifferent persons, feels increased affection for his real masters. He even licks their hands and face more frequently than when in good health; but at that stage the spittle is already infectious. As the disease proceeds in its course, the dog tries hard and makes every effort not to bite the persons he loves. The increased caresses of a dog out of health should be far from setting his owners' minds at ease.

Monsieur H. Bouley (whose *Rapport sur la Rage* deserves careful perusal, both by the medical profession and the police authorities) relates the following fact. Two ladies came to the veterinary school of Alfort, accompanied by a little girl four years old, to consult the surgeon about a dog which they nursed on their knees throughout their drive, and which wore a perfectly useless muzzle. This dog, they said, who slept in their room, had become so excited as to prevent their sleeping. All night long, he did nothing but scratch the floor with his feet.

The dog was evidently mad. He was scarcely within the iron gates of Alfort before his characteristic bark put the students on their guard. And yet this very dog, during the three days following his first indisposition, had scrupulously respected his mistresses. He had slightly bitten the child, but his teeth had not penetrated her clothing. When Monsieur Bouley expressed his astonishment at the easy way in which the ladies treated the affair, they answered, "How could we suppose the dog to be mad? He drank frequently; he even seemed thirsty and anxious for drink."

The bark which is peculiar to madness is the symptom most easily recognised by unprofessional persons. That bark

has lost its usual strength; its tone is mournful; it is hollow, stifled, degenerating into three or four half-uttered howls, producing a plaintive and singular effect on the ear. The first symptoms of canine madness are a sullenness of temper and an involuntary restlessness which manifests itself by a continual change of position. Instead of being snappish or aggressive, the dog tries to hide himself. During this first period, he does not always refuse his food.

Soon, however, he begins to loathe it. Then comes on an irresistible desire to bite; to gratify which he tears, crushes with his teeth, and swallows all sorts of things which are useless as food. A young dog certainly will tear things for fun, but he will not swallow them, whereas post mortem examinations of mad dogs show their stomachs to be full of sticks, straw, wool, stones, and other indigestible substances. Consequently, every dog past puppyhood who cannot be prevented from dragging about and destroying the carpets, mats, and cushions in the house, ought immediately to be placed under strict surveillance. The same precaution should be taken with dogs who show themselves unusually aggressive towards other animals of the same species. Indeed, a symptom of madness not to be neglected is the impression made on the mad dog by the dog in good health. Immediately the sick animal perceives the healthy one, a fit of rage is the consequence. At Alfort, this very test is had recourse to in doubtful cases. When the patient is shown another dog, if truly mad he does his utmost to get at him, and if allowed to do so, bites him furiously.

Curiously enough, all animals, of whatever species, when suffering under canine madness, are similarly affected by the presence of a dog. All are equally irritated, and manifest the same desire to attack the dog; the horse with his feet and teeth; the ram and the bull with their horns; even the sheep, gone mad, butts at the dog. Still more curiously, the anger of the ailing animal seems especially directed against the species of animal by which the disease was communicated to it. For instance, a horse inoculated at Alfort from a mad sheep, contracted the disease in its most exaggerated form, since he tore the skin of his own forelegs off with his teeth. But when a sheep was put before him, he was immediately seized with a paroxysm of rage, and the poor creature in no time was bitten to death.

The tendency of human patients to bite has been imagined, or enormously exaggerated. There is no case of the disease having been communicated from one human being to another. The friends of a sufferer may therefore fearlessly and charitably nurse him, without employing any greater precaution or any more violent or barbarous means than the strait-waistcoat during crises. His mind requires support and calming, as much as his body. Moral remedies are most efficacious; indeed material remedies, it may be believed, derive much of their influence from their moral effect. Every effort should be made to divert the patient's attention from the fixed idea which masters him. Even superstitious fancies have rendered good service.

Nor is an imitation of the voice of dogs a sign of hydrophobia, but rather one of those impostures and hallucinations which people delight in from time to time. At one epoch, extraordinary births; at another, marvellous abstinence from food; at another, communications with the unseen world, will be the rage, and find many imitators. Now and then the human voice assimilates itself to canine utterances. The Philosophical Transactions give an account of an extraordinary Spasmus of the kind, wherewith two families at Blackthorne, in Oxfordshire, were seized. The novelty of the thing attracted numerous visitors, and amongst them Doctor Willis, who a good while ere he reached the place heard a terrible noise of barking and howling. Upon his entering the house he was straight saluted by five girls, howling and answering each other by turns, with violent motions of the head. At intervals they had their reason and senses entire. Doctor Friend, the author of the memoir, himself visited another family in the same village, where one boy and three girls had been seized ten weeks, without any apparent preceding cause. At his arrival they were all at play unconcernedly before the door. Soon the eldest girl, about fourteen years of age, was seized with a fit. The others followed, making incessant and disagreeable noises. The doctor took the affection to be natural, arising from what was then supposed to be the common cause of all convulsions; namely, "from the animal spirits growing unruly in the nerves and driving the muscles into various contractions, according to the circumstances of the indisposition." It is a pity the doctor did not try the experiment of a good ducking under the pump, at the first symptom of an approach-

ing paroxysm, with an additional application of birch to the boy.

Diogenes, the cynic or doggish philosopher, is reputed to have died of hydrophobia. He is known to have snarled at his fellow-creatures, although it is not recorded that he howled, barked, or bit. Still, an attack of the disease may be preceded by curious premonitory feelings. The fourth Duke of Richmond—the Atheneum tells us — was doubly celebrated. He fought a duel with a prince of the blood, and he fell a victim to canine madness. It is right to add that he was a brave man, of unblemished character. The circumstances of his death were very sad. It happened long after the wound had healed. The duke was dining in a tent pitched in a Canadian clearing, when he said, "I don't know how it is, but I cannot relish my wine as usual; and I feel that, if I were a dog, I should be shot as a mad one."

Virulent hydrophobia appears to originate with quite a few animals. Dogs, wolves, foxes, and cats are alone susceptible of becoming spontaneously mad, and of transmitting the disease to other animals. The virus secreted by mad wolves is even more virulent than in mad dogs. That is, of a given number of persons bitten by a mad wolf, more will die than if the same number had been bitten by a mad dog. Not every animal gone mad after being bitten is able to communicate the madness. Among these are swine, cows, and sheep. Indeed, a mad sheep makes no attempt to bite, but evinces its excitement by butting with the head. Canine madness is most developed neither during severe winter's cold nor in the greatest summer heats, but in the months of March and April with wolves, and in May and September with dogs. It is rare both in very hot and very cold countries; in Egypt and in Siberia it is scarcely known. It is erroneously supposed to be confined, in Europe, to the dog days, or at all events to the warmer months of the year. In France, cases are nearly, if not quite, as frequent in winter as in summer.

It often happens that a dog, as soon as he feels ill, runs away from home. One would say that he is conscious of the danger which his presence might cause to those he loves, and that he intentionally goes to die in a corner or get killed in a street. Sometimes, and exceptionally, yielding to a natural attraction, he returns, and responds to a caress with a bite. Once

really mad, and running about at liberty, he attacks every living creature he meets, giving the preference to dogs over other animals, and preferring any animal to human beings.

We cannot too often repeat that, whatever charlatans may say, there is no known remedy for canine madness. When bitten, the surest means to escape infection is the application of red-hot iron with a firm hand, and as soon as possible. A curtain-rod, a small poker, a bit of stout wire, a knife, any iron nearest to hand, heated to a bright red, will suffice. With this the wound must be sounded and burnt. It is good to put the iron again into the fire and repeat the operation effectually. The pain is quite supportable. Monsieur Leblanc, senior, says that the cauterisation gives the person bitten, not exactly pleasure, but decided satisfaction, because the sense of preservation and safety completely overpowers the pain inflicted. In Haïti, where canine madness is common, they apply gunpowder to the wounded parts and then set fire to it. After this a blister, and mercurial treatment carried to salivation, complete the cure, or rather prevent the disease. Of course, after these necessary precautions, any known nostrum may be employed. Old women's receipts and popular prescriptions can do no harm, and may do good by keeping up the patient's spirits, and inspiring him with hopes of a favourable result.

Old fancies about hydrophobia are strange enough. Persons attacked never recovered, except when they were able to recognise themselves in a mirror, "because that was a proof that the poison had not yet taken possession of the animal parts." The hair of a mad dog, placed on the wound he has bitten, attracts the venom and cures the patient. Some people appear to think that one madness may homeopathically be driven out by another. A new prescription, from a missionary in Annam, and quite as strange as new, is, "Take three handfuls of thorn-apple leaves (*Datura stramonium*, a fearful poison); boil them in a quart of water until it is reduced to a pint. Let the patient drink this off at a draught. Violent madness will follow, but of short duration; profuse perspiration will succeed. In twenty-four hours, the patient will be cured"—if not killed in twelve. It is considerably added that the remedy may be tried on animals only. It reminds one of Jerome Paturot's famous mode of preventing sheep from dying of the rot. "In-

duce into the oesophagus a certain quantity of prussic acid." A similar plan has long been practised by shepherds, who send for the butcher, to save the lives of ailing lambs.

It is a great consolation to know that a person may be bitten by a really mad dog without contracting the disease. A bite through clothing has rarely serious consequences; the saliva—the only vehicle of infection—being thus wiped from the animal's teeth. Out of twenty individuals bitten, it is uncertain how many will go mad; perhaps none. But it is quite certain that they will not all go mad. The cause of the escape is unknown; but such escapes make the fortune of charlatans, cunning men, and practisers of superstitions. Bitten persons, who have taken such and such drugs, or have gone through such and such devotional forms, and remain unharmed, never fail, they and theirs, to attribute the result to the means employed. But it is a reassuring thought, likely to have a favourable influence, without hindering the employment of rational precautions, to know that, although bitten, it is quite possible not to be touched by the poison. Infinitely better is it to persuade the patient of this, than to hazard remedies which will make as many victims as there are persons foolish enough to try them.

Taxes, after all, may be good for something. The high tax on dogs in England probably prevents many sad accidents. Even now, in France, since the imposition of the dog-tax at the beginning of the Second Empire, there is at least one dog to every eighteen inhabitants. Before that tax, there must have been nearly as many canine as human inhabitants. Deaths from hydrophobia were terribly frequent—they still are much more so than in England—and more occurred than met the public ear. Sudden deaths, mysterious hints as to sufferings shortened by opium and other means, were some of the fruits of the plague of dogs. You could not traverse a village without being barked at and pursued by a pack of curs. If you complained, every villager assured you that his own particular dog was the best-tempered possible, and was never known to bite. Many of these dogs, kept for poaching and other forms of private amusement, were maintained at the expense of their owner's children. The writer has often seen them snatch away the meal (a thick slice of bread and butter) that had been given to their master's child,

who had therefore to fast until meal-time came round again.

When the dog-tax—one of Napoleon the Third's boldest measures—was decreed, dogs were hung and drowned, throughout the land and the water, by thousands; and there still remain too many to be either safe or pleasant. Why does not Monsieur Thiers triple that tax? Doctor Boudin, in a memoir read before the Paris Academy of Medicine, calculates that the maintenance of the dogs existing in Europe costs more than forty thousand pounds sterling per day, or more than fourteen millions and a half annually. He does not believe in the spontaneous outbreak of hydrophobic madness, either in the dog or any other animal, but that it is always communicated.

The muzzle is as questionable a precaution as it is ineffectual. Most muzzles are simply inconvenient and irritating appendages to a dog's head; mere pretexts for giving the dog liberty to bite. A muzzle tight enough to prevent biting, would also prevent breathing by the mouth.

STAGE STORMS.

ADDISON accounted "thunder and lightning—which are often made use of at the descending of a god or the rising of a ghost, at the vanishing of a devil or the death of a tyrant"—as occupying the first place "among the several artifices put in practice by the poets to fill the minds of an audience with terror." Certainly the stage owes much to its storms; they have long been highly prized both by playwrights and playgoers as awe-inspiring embellishments of the scene; and it must have been an early occupation of the theatrical machinist to devise some means of simulating the uproar of elemental strife. So far back as 1571, in the Accounts of the Revels at Court, there appears a charge of twenty-two shillings paid to a certain John Izarde "for mony to him due for his device in counterfeting thunder and lightning in the play of *Narcisses*; and for sundry necessaries by him spent therein;" while to Robert Moore, the apothecary, a sum of twenty-seven shillings and fourpence is paid for "prepared corianders," musk, clove, cinnamon, and ginger comfits, rose and "spike" water, "all which," it is noted, "served for flakes of ice and hayle stones in the maske of *Janus*; the rose-water sweetened the balls made for snow-balls, and presented to her majesty by

Janus." The storm in this masque must clearly have been of a very elegant and courtly kind, with sugar-plums for hailstones and perfumed water for rain. The tempests of the public theatres were assuredly conducted after a ruder method. In his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*, Ben Jonson finds occasion to censure contemporary dramatists for the "ill customs" of their plays, and to warn the audience that his production is not as others are:

He rather prays you will be pleased to see
One such to-day as other plays should be;
Where neither chorus wafts you o'er the seas,
Norreaking throne comes down the boys to please,
Nor nimble squib is seen to make afraid
The gentlewomen; nor rolled bullet heard
To say it thunders; nor tempestuous drum
Rumbles to tell you when the storm doth come, &c.

It has been conjectured that satirical allusion was here intended to the writings of Shakespeare; yet it is certain that Shakespeare sustained a part, most probably that of Old Knowell, in the first representation of Jonson's comedy. Storms are certainly of frequent occurrence in Shakespeare's plays. Thus *Macbeth* and the *Tempest* both open with thunder and lightning; there is "loud weather" in the *Winter's Tale*; there is thunder in the First Part of *King Henry the Sixth* when La Pucelle invokes the fiends to aid her endeavours; thunder and lightning in the Second Part of *King Henry the Sixth* when Margery Jourdain conjures up the spirit Asmuth; thunder and lightning in *Julius Caesar*; a storm at sea in *Pericles*, and a hurricane in *King Lear*. It is to be noted, however, that all these plays could hardly have been represented so early as 1598, when *Every Man in his Humour* was first performed.

From Jonson's prologue it appears that the rumbling of thunder was at that time imitated by the rolling to and fro of bullets or cannon-balls. This plan was in time superseded by more ingenious contrivances. It is curious to find, however, that some fifty years ago one Lee, manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, with a view to improving the thunder of his stage, ventured upon a return to the Elizabethan system of representing a storm. His enterprise was attended with results at once ludicrous and disastrous. He placed ledges here and there along the back of his stage, and, obtaining a parcel of nine-pound cannon-balls, packed these in a wheelbarrow, which a carpenter was instructed to wheel to and fro over the ledges. The play was *Lear*, and the jolting of the heavy barrow as it

was trundled along its uneven path over the hollow stage, and the rumblings and reverberations thus produced counterfeited most effectively the raging of the tempest in the third act. Unfortunately, however, while the king was braving, in front of the scene, the pitiless storm at the back, the carpenter missed his footing, tripped over one of the ledges, and fell down, wheelbarrow, cannon-balls, and all. The stage being on a declivity, the cannon-balls came rolling rapidly and noisily down towards the front, gathering force as they advanced, and overcoming the feeble resistance offered by the scene, struck it down, passed over its prostrate form, and made their way towards the foot-lights and the fiddlers, amidst the amusement and wonder of the audience, and the amazement and alarm of the Lear of the night. As the nine-pounders advanced towards him, and rolled about in all directions, he was compelled to display an activity in avoiding them, singularly inappropriate to the age and condition of the character he was personating. He was even said to resemble a dancer achieving the terpsichorean feat known as the egg-hornpipe. Presently, too, the musicians became alarmed for the safety of themselves and their instruments, and deemed it advisable to scale the spiked partition which divided them from the pit; for the cannon-balls were upon them, smashing the lamps, and falling heavily into the orchestra. Meantime, exposed to the full gaze of the house, lay prone, beside his empty barrow, the carpenter, the innocent invoker of the storm he had been unable to allay or direct, not at all hurt, but exceedingly frightened and bewildered. After this unlucky experiment, the manager abandoned his wheelbarrow and cannon-balls, and reverted to more received methods of producing stage storms.

In 1713, a certain Doctor Reynardson published a poem called the Stage, which the critics of the time agreed to be a pretty and ingenious composition. It was dedicated to Addison, the preface stating that "the Spectator's account of the Distrest Mother had raised the author's expectation to such a pitch that he made an excursion from college to see that tragedy acted, and upon his return was commanded by the dean to write upon the Art, Rise, and Progress of the English Stage; which how well he has performed is submitted to the judgment of that worthy gentleman to whom it is inscribed." Doctor Reynardson's poem is not a work of any great distinction, and need

only be referred to here for its mention of the means then in use for raising the storms of the theatre. Noting the strange and incongruous articles to be found in the tiring-room of the players — such as Tarquin's trousers and Lucretia's vest, Roxana's coif and Statira's stays, the poet proceeds :

Hard by a quart of bottled lightning lies
A bowl of double use and monstrous size,
Now rolls it high and rumbles in its speed,
Now drowns the weaker crack of mustard seed ;
So the true thunder all arrayed in smoke,
Launched from the skies now rives the knotted oak,
And sometimes naught the drunkard's prayers prevail,
And sometimes condescends to sour ale.

There is also allusion to the mustard bowl as applied to theatrical uses in the Dunciad :

Now turn to different sports, the goddess cries,
And learn, my sons, the wondrous power of Noise.
To move, to raise, to ravish every heart
With Shakespeare's nature or with Jonson's art,
Let others aim ; 'tis yours to shake the soul
With thunder rumbling from the mustard bowl.

And further reference to the frequency of stage storms is continued in the well-known lines, written by way of parodying the mention of the Duke of Marlborough in Addison's poem the Campaign :

Immortal Rich ! how calm he sits at ease,
'Mid snores of paper and fierce hail of pease ;
And proud his mistress' orders to perform
Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.

A note to the early editions of the Dunciad explains that the old ways of making thunder and mustard were the same, but that of late the thunder had been advantageously simulated by means of "troughs of wood with stops in them." "Whether Mr. Dennis was the inventor of that improvement, I know not," writes the annotator ; "but it is certain that being once at a tragedy of a new author he fell into a great passion at hearing some, and cried, 'Sdeath, that is my thunder.' " Dennis's thunder was first heard on the production at Drury Lane Theatre, in 1709, of his *Appius and Virginia*, a hopelessly dull tragedy, which not even the united exertions of Booth, Wilkes, and Betterton could keep upon the stage for more than four nights. The Dunciad was written in 1726, when Pope either did not really know that the old mustard-bowl style of storm was out of date, or purposely refrained from mentioning the recent invention of "troughs of wood with stops in them."

In July, 1709, Drury Lane Theatre was closed by order of the Lord Chamberlain, whereon Addison published in the Tatler a facetious inventory of the goods and movables of Christopher Rich, the manager, to be disposed of in consequence of

his "breaking up housekeeping." Among the effects for sale are mentioned :

A mustard-bowl to make thunder with.

Another of a bigger sort, by Mr. D—'s directions, little used.

The catalogue is not of course to be viewed seriously, or it might be inferred that Dennis's new thunder was still something of the mustard-bowl sort. Other items relative to the storms of the stage and their accessories are :

Spirits of right Nantz brandy for lambent flames and apparitions.

Three bottles and a half of lightning.

A sea consisting of a dozen large waves, the tenth bigger than ordinary, and a little damaged.

(According to poetic authority, it may be noted, the tenth wave is always the largest and most dangerous.)

A dozen and a half of clouds trimmed with black, and well conditioned.

A set of clouds after the French mode, streaked with lightning and furbelowed.

One shower of snow in the whitest French paper.

Two showers of a brownier sort.

It is probably to this mention of snowstorms we owe the familiar theatrical story of the manager who, when white paper failed him, met the difficulty of the situation by snowing brown.

The humours of the theatre afforded great diversion to the writers in the *Spectator*, and the storms of the stage are repeatedly referred to in their essays. In 1711, Steele, discoursing about inanimate performers, published a fictitious letter from "the Salmoneus of Covent Garden," demanding pity and favour on account of the unexpected vicissitudes of his fortune. "I have for many years past," he writes, "been thunderer to the playhouse; and have not only made as much noise out of the clouds as any predecessor of mine in the theatre that ever bore that character, but have also descended, and spoke on the stage as the Bold Thunderer in the Rehearsal. When they got me down thus low, they thought fit to degrade me further, and make me a ghost. I was contented with this for these last two winters; but they carry their tyranny still further, and not satisfied that I am banished from above ground, they have given me to understand that I am wholly to depart from their dominions, and taken from me even my subterraneous employment." He concludes with a petition that his services may be engaged for the performance of a new opera to be called the *Expedition of Alexander*, the scheme of which had been set forth in an earlier *Spectator*, and that

if the author of that work "thinks fit to use fire-arms, as other authors have done, in the time of Alexander, I may be a cannon against Porsus, or else provide for me in the burning of Persepolis, or what other method you shall think fit."

In 1714, Addison wrote: "I look upon the playhouse as a world within itself. They have lately furnished the middle region of it with a new set of meteors in order to give the sublime to many modern tragedies. I was there last winter at the first rehearsal of the new thunder, which is much more deep and sonorous than any hitherto made use of. They have a Salmoneus behind the scenes, who plays it off with great success. Their lightnings are made to flash more briskly than heretofore; their clouds are also better furbelowed, and more voluminous; not to mention a violent storm locked up in a great chest that is designed for the *Tempest*. They are also provided with a dozen showers of snow, which, as I am informed, are the plays of many unsuccessful poets, artificially cut and shredded for that use." In an earlier *Spectator* he had written: "I have often known a bell introduced into several tragedies with good effect, and have seen the whole assembly in a very great alarm all the while it has been ringing." Pope has his mention in the *Dunciad* of the same artifice :

With horns and trumpets now to madness swell,
Now sink in sorrow with a tolling bell;
Such happy arts attention can command,
When fancy flags, and sense is at a stand.

The notion of storing lightning in a bottle for use when required seems to have been frequently reverted to by the authors of the last century as a means of entertaining the public. Thus a writer in the *World*, in 1754, makes no doubt "of being able to bring thunder and lightning to market at a much cheaper price than common gunpowder," and describes a friend who has applied himself wholly to electrical experiments, and discovered that "the most effectual and easy method of making this commodity is by grinding a certain quantity of air between a glass ball and a bag of sand, and when you have ground it into fire your lightning is made, and then you may either bottle it up, or put it into casks properly seasoned for that purpose, and send it to market." The inventor, however, confesses that what he has hitherto made is not of a sufficient degree of strength to answer all the purposes of natural lightning; but he is confident that he will soon

be able to effect this, and has, indeed, already so far perfected his experiments that, in the presence of several of his neighbours, he has succeeded in producing a clap of thunder which blew out a candle, accompanied by a flash of lightning which made an impression upon a pat of butter standing upon the table. He is also confident that in warm weather he can shake all the pewters upon his shelf, and fully expects, when his thermometer is at sixty-two degrees and a half, to be able to sour all the small beer in his cellar, and to break his largest pier-glass. This paper in the *World*, apart from its humorous intention, is curious as a record of early dabblings in electrical experiments. It may be mentioned that in one of Franklin's letters, written apparently before the year 1750, the points of resemblance between lightning and the spark obtained by friction from an electrical apparatus are distinctly stated. It is but some thirty years ago that Andrew Crosse, the famous amateur electrician, was asked by an elderly gentleman, who came to witness his experiments with two enormous Leyden jars charged by means of wires stretched for miles among the forest trees near Taunton: "Mr. Crosse, don't you think it is rather impious to bottle the lightning?"

"Let me answer your question by asking another," said Crosse, laughing. "Don't you think it might be considered rather impious to bottle the rain-water?"

Further it may be remembered that curious reference to this part of our subject is made by "the gentleman in the small-clothes" who lived next door to Mrs. Nickleby, and presumed to descend the chimney of her house. "Very good," he is reported to have said on that occasion, "then bring in the bottled lightning, a clean tumbler, and a corkscrew."

The illusions of the stage were greatly enhanced by Garrick's Alsatian scene-painter, Philip James de Loutherbourg, a man of genius in his way, and an eminent innovator and reformer in the matter of theatrical decoration. Before his time the scenes had been merely strained "flats" of canvas, extending the whole breadth and height of the stage. He was the first to introduce set scenes and what are technically called "raking pieces." He invented transparent scenes, with representations of moonlight, rising and setting suns, fires, volcanoes, &c., and contrived effects of colour by means of silk screens of various hues placed before the foot and side lights.

He was the first to represent a mist by suspending a gauze between the scene and the spectator. For two seasons he held a dioramic exhibition of his own, called the *Eidophusikon*, at the Patagonian Theatre in Exeter Change, and afterwards at a house in Panton-square. The special attraction of the entertainment was a storm at sea, with the wreck of the *Halsewell*, East Indiaman. No pains were spared to picture the tempest and its most striking effects. The clouds were movable, painted upon a canvas of vast size, and rising diagonally by means of a winding machine. The artist excelled in his treatment of clouds, and, by regulating the action of his windlass, he could direct their movements, now permitting them to rise slowly from the horizon and sail obliquely across the heavens, and now driving them swiftly along according to their supposed density and the power ascribed to the wind. The lightning quivered through transparent places in the sky. The waves, carved in soft wood from models made in clay, coloured with great skill, and highly varnished to reflect the lightning, rose and fell with irregular action, flinging the foam now here, now there, diminishing in size, and dimming in colour, as they receded from the spectator. "De Loutherbourg's genius," we are informed, "was as prolific in imitations of nature to astonish the ear as to charm the sight. He introduced a new art—the picturesque of sound." That is to say, he imitated the noise of thunder by shaking one of the lower corners of a large, thin sheet of copper suspended by a chain; the distant firing of signals of distress from the doomed vessel he counterfeited by suddenly striking a large tambourine with a sponge affixed to a whalebone spring, the reverberations of the sponge producing a peculiar echo as from cloud to cloud dying away in the distance. The rushing, washing sound of the waves was simulated by turning round and round an octagonal pasteboard box, fitted with shelves, and containing small shells, peas, and shot; while two discs of tightly-strained silk, suddenly pressed together, produced a hollow whistling sound in imitation of loud and fitful gusts of wind. Cylinders, loosely charged with seed and small shot, lifted now at one end, now at the other, so as to allow the contents to fall in a pattering stream, effectually reproduced the noise of hail and rain. The moon was formed by a circular aperture cut in a tin box containing a

powerful argand lamp, which was placed at the back of the scene, and brought near or removed from the canvas as the luminary was supposed to be shining brightly or to be obscured by clouds. These contrivances of Mr. De Loutherbourg may now, perhaps, be deemed to be of rather a commonplace description—they have figured so frequently, and in such amplified and amended forms upon the modern stage; but they were calculated to impress the painter's patrons very considerably; they were then distinctly innovations due to his curiously inventive genius, and the result of much labour and heedful ingenuity. If the theatrical entertainments of the present time manifest little progress in histrionic art, there has been, at any rate, marked advance in the matter of scenic illusions and mechanical effects. The thunder of our modern stage storms may no more proceed from mustard-bowls, or from "troughs of wood with stops in them," but it is, at any rate, sufficiently formidable and uproarious, sometimes exciting, indeed, the anxiety of the audience, lest it should crush through the roof of the theatre, and visit them bodily in the pit; while for our magnesium or lime-light flashes of lightning, they are beyond anything that "spirit of right Nantz brandy" could effect in the way of lambent flames, have a vividness that equals reality, and, moreover, leave behind them a pungent and sulphurous odour that may be described as even supernaturally noxious. The stage storm still bursts upon the drama from time to time; the theatre is still visited in due course by its rainy and tempestuous season; and thunder and lightning are, as much as in Addison's time, among the favourite devices of our playwrights—for sufficient reasons, we no longer designate them poets—"put in practice to fill the minds of an audience with terror." The terror may not be quite of the old kind, but still it does well enough.

LORD WESTBOURNE'S HEIR.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It was as a great favour to me that my lord's agent let me stay on at the farm, after my poor husband died. It was but a small farm, and it was sadly overrun by the hares and rabbits, so there were not many good tenants offering for it. The house lay in a corner of the great wall which my lord had built, miles and miles long all round his park, for nothing but to spite the fox-hunters. He had lived such

a wild, bad life, and there were such goings-on at the Hall, that no lady in the county would set her foot in it, and as years went by even the gentlemen turned a cold shoulder upon him, in spite of his lordship. It was then he built the wall ten feet high round the park, in the midst of a great hunting country, and many and many a good run had been spoilt, and many and many an oath sworn against him by the fox-hunters.

That was all over now—the wickedness I mean. The wall was standing still, falling here and there into great gaps. My lord had been so angry at last with the gentry, who avoided him, that he shut up the Hall, and took himself off to some foreign place abroad, him and his heir, Mr. Lionel. There the grand old house remained, deserted and silent, as if it was being purified from its great wickedness. All the servants were discharged, and only an old valet of my lord's was left, who was trusted to sleep in it alone, quite alone in the solitary attics, with all the great galleries, and reception-rooms, and guest-chambers, which had once been alive with many faces, and voices, and footsteps, now as silent and empty, more empty, than a churchyard. It used to make me shake and dither to think of it, when I lay awake of nights, in my own little house.

Not that my house was much less lonesome, after my husband died. I'd a little servant-girl sleeping under the same roof, and that was all. There were only two labourers working on my farm, and they were married, and lived in cottages of their own. Nancy Trevor, the wife of one of them, was my other servant, the best and trustiest woman in all the country side, as careful for me as ever I could be for myself. For a few nights after my husband's death she slept at my house, but I could not keep her away from her own place always; so now I used to lie awake of nights, listening to the stillness, and thinking how awfully lonesome was my lord's valet, in the great pile of buildings, far away out of hearing or seeing of any other dwelling.

That feeling of nervousness was growing upon me very fast, when one day I saw a strange gentleman riding up to the fold-gate; for the house stood in the fold, and there was no other way of getting to it. There was no road passing my farm nearer than a mile away; and whoever came to it must come on purpose, and for business of his own. There were very few people, besides the butcher and the cheese-factor,

who had any business with me. I had just finished making the morning's cheese, and had only time to take off my coarse apron, and put on a clean cap, before the strange gentleman was up at the front door. He was a young man about thirty, very pleasant looking; and I could see by his dress that he was a clergyman. I dropped him a curtsy, and asked him if he'd please to step into my little parlour. As I was trying to open the window, which stuck fast from not being opened often, I could see him looking about very attentively. It was only seldom we used the parlour, but it was as clean as Nancy's hands and mine could make it; and though the furniture was very old, having belonged to my husband's mother, it was kept very bright. So I did not feel offended at the gentleman's keen eyes going from one thing to another.

"I called to ask you, Mrs. Abbott," he said, "if you'd have any objection to taking in a lodger who would pay you well."

I wondered if he meant himself, and I felt in a moment how much less lonesome it would be with another person in the house. But I waited for him to say more, only curtsied again to let him see I was attending.

"I wish to find a home for a young married lady," he went on, "with a baby a few months old. She is used to a quiet, country life, and a farm-house, and will not give you much trouble. If I might tell you who she is, and who her husband is, you would know that it would be very much to your advantage to receive her; but you must take my word for it. I, too, will be responsible for any money due to you, and will pay you once a month."

"Will you please to say who you are, sir?" I asked, half afraid of giving him offence, but he only smiled very pleasantly.

"I am Charles Vernon," he said, "the rector of Glen Parva. I know your little farm well; for Lionel Westbourne and I lunched here, in this pretty room, six or seven years ago."

Then I recollected him, for I had had a feeling all along of having seen him before; and it had been a rare enough thing, even in my husband's lifetime, to have a visitor; though now and then young gentlemen who were shooting about the place, might call in, and ask for a draught of our home-brewed ale. Yes; I remembered him, and the young lord, as would be, sitting there, eating bread and cheese as hungry as labourers, and laughing and joking together

like great friends. After that I could give no other answer save yes.

"I want you to meet her yourself," said Mr. Vernon, after all arrangements had been made; "you have a trap of some sort, I suppose, and she will come down to Newton by the half-past three train tomorrow. I do not wish to be seen with her myself; why, you will understand fully some day soon, I hope. By-the-bye, she is not an Englishwoman, and does not know a word of English; but she will learn quickly. You will know her by that, and by her having a baby in her arms. I will prepare her to know you when she sees you."

It was a lovely afternoon the next day. Hay harvest was just over, and the fields were almost as bright a green as in the spring; while the corn was at the yellowest and sunniest; before growing brown with ripeness. My gig had been made many and many a year, and it was large enough to hold three with comfort; and my old cob was as sure-footed as a donkey. But it was a long time since I had driven into Newton, and the town seemed so full of folks that I inquired at the inn if anything was going on out of the common. But they said no; it was always as full as that. The station was ten times worse; there was such a hurry, and confusion, and scrambling when the train came in that I was fairly bewildered; and it was not till it was gone on again, and nearly out of sight, that I saw a young lady, very sweet, and pretty, and pale-looking, who was standing all alone, with a little baby held tight in her arms. I ran to her, and offered to take the child from her.

"I'm Susan Abbott, ma'am," I said, "the person Mr. Vernon sent to meet you."

But the poor young thing only shook her head, and smiled; though I saw the tears start into her eyes. Then she murmured a little word or two, which I could not make any sense of, and laid her baby in my arms. It was as fine and lovely a child as I ever saw, and I could not forbear bending my face down to it, to kiss its soft rosy cheek. As I lifted up my head again I saw the young lady wipe away her tears.

"Come with me, ma'am," I said, very loud, and pointing to the gig outside in the station-yard. She understood me quite well and followed me like a lamb, and got into the gig, and took the child upon her lap. Then I saw to the trunk being safely tied at the back of the gig, and so we started off home.

It was very queer riding beside a person

who did not know a word you said. She looked about the country, with her lovely blue eyes, as blue as the sky overhead; and I did my best to explain what the places were. We had to pass the Hall gates, with their great stone pillars covered over with moss, and the hinges all brown with rust. I pulled up the cob to let her look down the long avenue of lime-trees, and see the deer lying down among the bracken in the shadow of the trees.

"Hall!" I cried, very distinctly, "Hall! Lord Westbourne, his house! Lord Westbourne!" I thought she seemed to understand me a little, for the colour came into her face, and she leaned forward to look the better into the park, all green and sunny, with long shadows across the turf thrown by the low light of the sun. So we lingered a minute; and then we drove on to the fields, which lay between the high road and my farm.

I never knew a creature settle down so quickly and naturally into a new home. It was like a stray, unfledged bird come back to its nest again. The sweet pretty darling found a place for all her few things immediately, made a little cot for her baby, undressed him herself, and then sat in my rocking-chair outside the door, for it was a warm evening, singing him to sleep, while Nancy and I milked the cows in the fold. All the house seemed changed, with her and the child there. It was cheery and sociable like a home. The very click of the rockers on the quarries was almost as much music to me as her singing was; though that was very sweet and soothing, and brought to my mind the days when I was a child, and had a mother. I felt that I did not much care whether Mr. Vernon paid for them being there or not.

But he did pay regularly, sending a ten-pound note every month for me inside a letter to the young lady. These letters were all written in a foreign language; and, of course, I did not know a word of them. She was learning a little English; just the names of the things she wanted most; and how to call me and Nancy, and the names of the animals about us. Generally she made herself very content; but now and then she would be low and mope a little. Once when she was most melancholy, I fetched her bonnet and shawl and made signs to her to put them on; and I dressed myself and the baby. I thought we would go across the park and up to the Hall, for I fancied a little change would do her good.

So long as we were in the park it did do

her good. It was very beautiful with the old trees branching out across the turf, and the leaves all brown and red and gold with the autumn, and tossing and dancing in the wind; and the deer watching us shyly from a distance; and here and there a hare leaping across our path. But when we reached the stables, which we had to pass to get to the house, they looked forlorn enough. There were stalls for a hundred horses, and many coach-houses, and a large clock over the archway; but there was not a sound to be heard, and the clock was standing, and grass was growing up between the stones of the yard. Madam, as I called her, not yet knowing any other name, pressed close to my side, and looked eagerly into my face.

"Stables!" I said, "horses! No horses now!" and I shook my head mournfully; for I had known the time when we should have heard many a whinny and the stamp of many a hoof, and the whistling of a score of grooms and the rattling of carriage-wheels going in and out. How different it was now!

But if the stables were desolate what do you suppose the house was? We found my lord's valet in the kitchen looking like a single parched pea in a big canister. He was small, and thin, and spare, and had a scared face as if every night he slept with the clothes drawn over his head for fear. We were welcome to see over the Hall, he said; and he would go with us, for it was not often he had a chance of any talk with anybody save himself. So he and I walked together, and my sweet young lady, with her baby in her arms, strolled here and there with a serious sad face which scarcely brightened up once.

It was no place to raise one's spirits, it is true. There were all the grand saloons with the furniture left in them as if they were in daily use, and you might expect my lord to come in and sit down on one of the satin chairs, or come upon some of his gay London visitors playing at billiards, or laughing and chatting in one of the boudoirs. The bed-chambers were the same, with the beds made up as if they were slept in every night; and I could not help the feeling that they were slept in, though I would not have said so to my lord's valet for the world. Desolation reigned over the place; and I could not get it out of my head that it was being cleansed from the stains and disgrace of my lord's wicked ways, by being given up to silence and loneliness, and the soundless creeping presence of inmates whom we could not see.

"When will my lord come back?" I inquired.

"Never!" said the valet, very drearily; "but I live in hopes that Mr. Lionel will marry, and come here. I live in hopes."

We were walking through a gallery just then, with polished floors and great windows looking out upon the terrace. There were a few portraits hanging against the wall, as large as real life: and we heard a little cry, and saw madam standing as still as a post before one of them, her face deathly pale, and her blue eyes full of pain and terror.

"That's Mr. Lionel," said my lord's valet.

I ran to her, and called "Mr. Lionel! Mr. Lionel!" in her ear, as plainly as I could speak. Then she began to shiver and sob a little, and I took the child from her, and she sank down on a window-sill, and wept quite quietly, without a sound, but as if she would cry her very heart away. It was times like that I most longed to know how to talk to her, and comfort her; but I could do nothing, save sit down by her, and draw her pretty head on to my bosom, and let her feel the baby's face against her own. When she had recovered herself pretty well, we bid good-bye to my lord's valet, and went away home.

After that she began to droop and fade like a flower that lacks sunshine. But I hoped that the sun would break out upon her soon, and cheer and revive her. Sometimes I thought I would write a line or two to Mr. Vernon; but it was hard work, was writing, and I put it off from day to day, especially as he wrote regularly to her, and she to him. January came in very cold, the snow lying feet deep over the country, and we were shut out from all the world. She liked the snow, I was sure, for she sat at the window hours together, her poor face almost as white, and her eyes a deeper blue than the frosty skies were. I noticed, too, that she left off trying to learn English, and would talk and sing to the baby in that strange, outlandish tongue, as if she wanted to teach it to him.

Yet it was all so gradual, the fading and the pining, that I did not think of death till his hand was upon her, and I could see it in her pinched face and shining eyes. Then I sent Nancy's husband for a doctor, in spite of the deep snow and heavy roads; but when he came he said it was of no use, and he could have done nothing if he had come sooner. But I made up my mind that I would drive over to Glen Parva, which was twelve miles away, and fetch

Mr. Vernon, as soon as ever there was a little thaw to soften the roads.

The end came quicker and sooner than I expected. The pretty dear called me to her side one afternoon, and I stood by her, looking down on her white face, with the pillows, and linen, and curtains of the bed all white, and the white snow out of doors glistening very coldly, and lying like a winding-sheet over the fields and meadows. It made me shiver till I could hardly stand steady, and keep her icy cold hand in my hard worn fingers. The baby lay beside her, fast asleep, with a face like a rose on the pillow. Her blue eyes were growing glazed and dim, but they fastened upon mine with a beseeching, frightened look, like a poor dumb creature caught in a snare. She talked fast, very fast, but every word in that unknown language, and her head tossed to and fro restlessly as she turned from me to her boy, and then back again to me. I knelt down by her side, and kissed her hand, poor love! telling her over and over again that the boy should be like my own. But the pity was she could not understand; she could understand nothing save my tears and kisses; and she went on talking, talking, till her voice began to fail, and her thin cheek was getting chilly with death.

Then the poor young thing made a sign with her fingers on the bed-clothes, as if they held a pen, and she was writing. All at once it came across my mind that she might have written what she had been trying to say to me, and somebody would have known the meaning of the words. At the least Mr. Vernon would. So I ran and fetched the slate that hung behind the dairy door, where I used to set down things I had to recollect; and I laid it before her, and put the pencil into her stiffening fingers. She opened her eyes, and roused herself with a smile of great gladness on her pretty face; but it was almost too late. It was growing dark with her, and her hand would hardly do what she wished. But she wrote a few words in large, unsteady letters, stretching across the slate, and then with a very quiet, soft sigh, her head dropped again on the pillow, and I knew that all was over.

Just then the baby awoke, and began to cry, feeling about for his mother. I took up the poor darling, and carried him away; taking care my tears should not fall upon his face, for luck's sake. Nancy was waiting down-stairs, and I sent her to do what must be done in every death-room, bidding her take my best home-spun linen bed-gown

to lay the poor young foreign lady in. A very dreary night it was to me, though the baby, dear child! slept sweetly and soundly in my arms.

The next morning early I left Nancy in charge, and drove over to Glen Parva. Before I started I copied the words from the slate, just as my young lady had written them. They were these: "Aimez-le bien, mon pauvre petit Victor. Quand son père reviendra." That was all. It seemed a thousand pities everybody did not speak English, which comes naturally to one. However, Mr. Vernon would understand the words, and know what must be done with the child. I only hoped he would leave him with me for awhile; for the baby had been weaned these three months, and I had done almost everything for him since his mother had been taken ill.

I drove to an inn near the church and rectory, and got down from my gig. The landlord gave a helping hand, and when I was safe on the causeway, I asked him right away, for I was in haste to get home again, twelve miles out and in, and the days so short, if he knew where I could meet with Mr. Vernon.

"Lord love you!" he cried, "where do you come from, as you haven't heard the news? Mr. Vernon was drowned dead a week last Wednesday, skating on the river, and trying to save a lady as had fallen through the ice. He was buried yesterday."

You might have knocked me down with a straw; and the landlord, seeing me like that, helped me into the bar-parlour. He told me all about it, so exactly, that I seemed to see the fine, pleasant young gentleman being drawn out of the river, with the water streaming down from his hair and clothes, quite dead. "He hadn't any near relations," said the landlord; "but all the country gentry had made a great funeral for him which I should have seen, if I had only come the day before."

Though I was in a good deal of perplexity, I did not say much to the landlord. Only I showed him the words I had copied, and he held the paper to the light all ways; but he could make nothing of them, except he thought Victor was a Christian name. There was nobody at the rectory to go to; so as I was afraid of the

night, I started home again, as soon as my cob was ready to take me back.

Everything rested upon me now. So I buried my young lady quietly in our parish churchyard, following her to the grave with the little laughing baby in my arms. I was also careful to examine her trunk for papers or letters, but I did not find one. Not even Mr. Vernon's letters. There was not a thing to show who she was; not even a single ring, or trinket, or keepsake. Very likely Mr. Vernon had taken care of everything of that sort, for fear of her losing them in a country foreign to her. The linen and gowns she had left I used up for Victor whilst he was wearing frocks; for I liked to see him in his poor mother's things.

The child was mine, all my own; and never was woman so glad as I was. Everything prospered with me after that. My ewes brought two or three lambs apiece, and none of my calves died, and the cows flourished, and even the hares and rabbits seemed less mischievous than formerly. I gave Victor a good education, only I brought him up to farm-work as well, so that he might do for either his mother's station or mine, supposing we ever found out who his mother and father were. We used to talk much and often about her, as he grew older; and he was never tired of hearing what I could tell him. I think it kept him gentler and better mannered than country boys often are, though he was fond of work, such as I let him do, taking the cattle to water, and driving the cows to pasture, and seeking for eggs in the farm-buildings.

He was near upon ten years of age, as bonny a lad as any in the country-side, when one day I heard his clear, boyish voice talking earnestly at the wicket in front of the house. I glanced through the window, and saw a gentleman standing there, with a handsome face, only spoiled a little by high living, such as is common enough among our gentry. Victor had his hat off, and his brown hair was pushed off away from his wide, white forehead, and his blue eyes—like his poor mother's—were shining brightly as he looked up into the stranger's face. I had often fancied Victor reminded me of somebody I knew; and now as those two stood opposite me, a sudden pang shot through my heart. You would have sworn they were father and son.